Indiana is known as the Crossroads to America because for many, Indiana was the territory that had to be traversed when migrating west or north of the established states. Indiana became the state where some individuals settled and many more traveled on to other regions.

In 1787, prior to statehood, Indiana was part of the Northwest Territory. On 11 December 1816, Indiana became the 19th state of the United States. The capital was established in Corydon, Harrison County, until 1825, when it was moved to the more centrally-located Indianapolis in Marion County. By 1840, the lands and borders of present-day Indiana were set.

**Census Records**

Prior to statehood, there are two enumerations available for the Indiana Territory, 1807 and 1810. The 1807 Territorial Census is available for Clark (est. 1801), Dearborn (est. 1803), Knox (est. 1790), and Randolph (Illinois) counties and only lists the Head of Household. The 1810 Territorial Census covers Clark, Dearborn, and Knox Counties, and Exeter and Harrison townships in Harrison County. Only the Heads of Households are listed.

Sources to consider for pre-statehood Census Records:

**Birth and Death Records**

Most counties began collecting birth and death records in 1882. Exceptions were the following cities who began collecting earlier: Fort Wayne in 1870, Indianapolis in 1872, Logansport in 1874, and Kokomo in 1875. These records are available at the County Health Department or County Vital Statistics Office. The state began collecting birth records in 1907 and death records in 1900.

For those who were born in the 1870s and turned 65 in the late-1930s through mid-1940s, the introduction of Social Security benefits led to a number of delayed birth records being filed. These started in July 1941 and are separate from county birth records. Delayed birth records were filed at the county of residence rather than the county of birth.

Sources to consider for Birth and Death Records:
- Check local county society publications and websites for birth and death records and indexes.
- *Index to Birth Records, (County), 1882-1920* and the *Index to Death Records, (County), 1882-1920*, produced by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) for most counties, can be found at most local county libraries or state libraries.
- *Indiana, WPA Birth Index, 1880-1920* (index for thirty Indiana counties) and *Indiana, Birth Certificates, 1907-1940* (index and images) available on Ancestry.com [https://www.ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com)
- *Pre-1882 Indiana Deaths* (index) [https://www.genealogycenter.info/search_pre1882deaths.php](https://www.genealogycenter.info/search_pre1882deaths.php)
- *Indiana Death Index, 1882-1920* available on FamilySearch.org [https://familysearch.org/]

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Marriage Records
Territorial law in 1800 mandated the collection of marriage licenses. As each county government was established, marriage records were recorded within the county. Marriage applications which provide personal details on each of the parties became available in 1906. The WPA indexed most counties’ marriage licenses from the formation of the county through 1920. The state began collecting copies of the marriage licenses from the counties starting in 1958. When deciding where to search, consider that prior to 1940, all marriage licenses had to be filed in the female’s county of residence.

Sources to consider for Marriage Records:
- Index to Marriage Records, (County), [date] - 1920 produced by the WPA for most counties covering from the formation of the county through 1920.
- Indiana Marriages, 1780-1992 (index) and Indiana Marriages, 1811-2007 (index and images) available on FamilySearch.org <https://familysearch.org/>
  The Indiana Marriages, 1811-2007 collection currently has images for every county, except Cass, Clinton, Crawford, Grant, Greene, Hancock, Jasper, Johnson, Knox, LaPorte, Madison, Marion, Monroe, Montgomery, Newton, Posey, Ripley, Tippecanoe, Union, Vanderburgh, Warren, and White Counties.
- Indiana Statewide Marriage Index, 1962-1992 is available on microfilm.

Divorce Records
Prior to 1852, individuals had to file with the Indiana State Legislature in order to obtain a divorce. These records are part of the legislative records. To learn more about Indiana Legislative Records visit the Indiana State Library at <https://www.in.gov/library/4066.htm>. In 1852, the county circuit courts were given jurisdiction over these legal procedures. Divorces filed with the county court can be found recorded within fee books, minutes, docket, and judgement books. Another good source for divorce details are local newspapers in the 1880s-1940s, where graphic accountings of the procedures can be found. Check with the local county genealogical society to see if they produced an index or abstract of local divorce cases. A number of publications, periodical articles, and online databases have been created by local genealogical societies.

Histories
County and local histories are a good place to learn more information about a particular locality. Knowledge of the political, social, and economic history of the region provides a better perspective on what motivated and influenced our ancestors.

Sources to consider for Histories:
- Index of Names of Persons and of Firms, available at Family History Books <https://www.familysearch.org/library/books/>, are individual volumes, divided by county, which index individuals and businesses chronicled in published county histories.

Newspapers
Most local libraries have copies of the local and regional newspapers. Newspaper indexes are not consistent so check with the local genealogical and historical societies and libraries. The Indiana State Library (ISL) is the repository for newspapers published within the state of Indiana, but they do not have copies for every paper published.
Sources to consider for Newspapers:
- Hoosier State Chronicles: Indiana’s Digital Historic Newspaper Program <https://newspapers.library.in.gov/>
- Miller, John W. Indiana Newspaper Bibliography: Historical Accounts of all Indiana Newspapers Published from 1804 to 1980. Indianapolis, IN: Indiana Historical Society, 1982.

**Court Records**
Court records are regularly researched for divorce, naturalization, deed and property records, wills and probate records, lawsuits, and much more. There are several resources available to help with understanding how Indiana courts are divided, the jurisdiction for each type of record, the development of each county court, and the maintenance of records. This knowledge helps in determining where to research for specific types of records.

Sources to consider for Court Records:
- Guide to Indiana Court Records <http://www.courtreference.com/Indiana-Courts.htm>
- Inventory of the County Archives of Indiana. Indianapolis, IN: Indiana Historical Records Survey, 1936-. The set is also available digitally at Internet Archive <https://archive.org/> for every county, except Dearborn, Hancock, Spencer, and Wayne Counties.

**Land Records**
Land in Indiana was surveyed with the rectangular survey system, which divides property using a baseline and meridian and describes the property by Township, Range, and Section numbers. Land Offices for Indiana lands were established in the following years:
- Cincinnati in 1801
- Vincennes in 1805
- Jeffersonville in 1807
- Brookville in 1819
- Terre Haute in 1820
- Fort Wayne in 1823
- La Porte in 1833

Deeds, showing the transfer of property between individuals, are maintained by the County Recorder’s Office. Several publications have been made that index or abstract deed records for specific counties.

Sources to consider for Land Records:
- Indiana Public Lands (Indiana Digital Archives) <https://secure.in.gov/apps/iara/search/>
  To search this collection, select “Additional Historical Records” under the Record Series field, then choose “Indiana Public Lands” in the Collections field.
- Land Records Collection: Land Office Index <https://www.in.gov/iara/2595.htm>
- Individual county publications index and abstract land patents, deeds, and mortgages.

**Wills and Probate Records**
Probate court and associated records, such as wills, inventories, administrations, accounts, and guardianships, are maintained at the county level. Many counties have published indexes and/or abstracts of these records. Another place to seek information are newspaper accounts which published announcements and decisions pertaining to a probate case.

**Naturalizations**
The Indiana State Archives is the repository for all naturalizations authorized in Indiana but many counties did not provide the Archives with originals or copies of their naturalization documents, so many of these records still reside at the county courthouse.
Sources to consider for Naturalizations:
- Indiana Digital Archives: Naturalization Record Series <https://secure.in.gov/apps/iara/search/>
- Local county societies have published indexes, abstracts, or transcripts.

Military Records
The people of Indiana have actively engaged in the military services since the colonial era and into current military activities. Records for those who participated in militia units can be found at the Indiana State Archives and Records Administration. Other materials that can be found at local libraries and societies include unit histories and other military-related compilations.

Local courthouses processed discharge papers for soldiers who served in the Civil War, Spanish American War, and twentieth century military conflicts. Indiana soldiers returning from serving in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War were eligible to apply for a bonus from the state. The Indiana State Archives has discharge records for soldiers who applied for this state bonus.

Sources to consider for Military Records:
- Early Military Collections (Indiana Digital Archives) <https://secure.in.gov/apps/iara/search/>
- Indiana Muster, Pay and Receipt Rolls, War of 1812 <http://ulib.iupui.edu/collections/War1812>
- Civil War Collections <http://images.indianahistory.org/cdm>
- Indiana World War I Deaths <https://www.genealogycenter.info/search_inww1deaths.php>

Repositories to Search
- Indiana Archives and Records Administration, Indianapolis, IN <https://www.in.gov/iara/>
- Indiana Genealogical Society <http://www.indgensoc.org/>
- Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, IN <https://indianahistory.org/>
- Indiana State Library, Indianapolis, IN <http://www.in.gov/library/>
- The Genealogy Center, Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, IN <http://genealogycenter.org>

Other Sources

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